



State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
Department of Health Services



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Director

GRAY DAVIS
Governor

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Dear Colleague:

I am pleased to forward you information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) concerning smallpox and the smallpox vaccination program. Please familiarize yourself with the information. As you may be aware, the first phase of the national smallpox vaccination program has begun in California. The California Department of Health Services is implementing the vaccination program in close coordination with local health jurisdictions. Initially, vaccination will be provided to public health and hospital-based health care response teams. These teams will be responsible for providing medical care, investigating potential cases of smallpox and vaccinating additional health care workers in the event of a smallpox outbreak. Smallpox vaccination is voluntary. Because of its risks smallpox vaccination is not recommended for the public and smallpox vaccine is not available to private health care providers at this time. In addition, the military is also vaccinating personnel at military bases in California.

Although vaccinees receive specific instructions on how to seek follow-up care and/or consultation from the vaccination clinic, you may encounter a recently vaccinated individual within the scope of your practice. In rare instances a family or household member may contract vaccinia, the virus in the smallpox vaccine, through close contact with a recently vaccinated person. The information should also be useful if your patients consult you about their personal decision regarding smallpox vaccination.

In addition to the information resources listed in the enclosed CDC materials, you can visit www.dhs.ca.gov/smallpox for more information on smallpox and the smallpox vaccination program within California.

Sincerely,

Diana M. Bontá, R.N., Dr.P.H.
Director

Enclosures



Do your part to help California save energy. To learn more about saving energy, visit the following web site:
www.consumerenergycenter.org/flex/index.html